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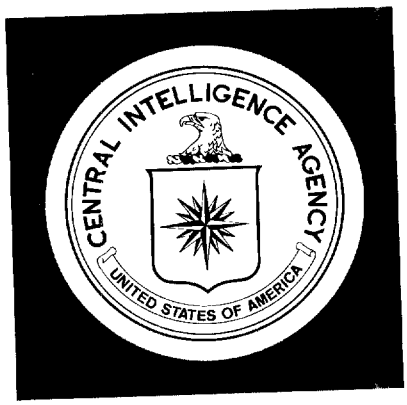

Weekly Summary

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No. 0037/75
September 12, 1975

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The WEEKLY SUMMARY, issued every Friday morning by the Office of Current Intelligence, reports and analyzes significant developments of the week through noon on Thursday. It frequently includes material coordinated with or prepared by the Office of Economic Research, the Office of Strategic Research, the Office of Geographic and Cartographic Research, and the Directorate of Science and Technology. Topics requiring more comprehensive treatment and therefore published separately as Special Reports are listed in the contents.

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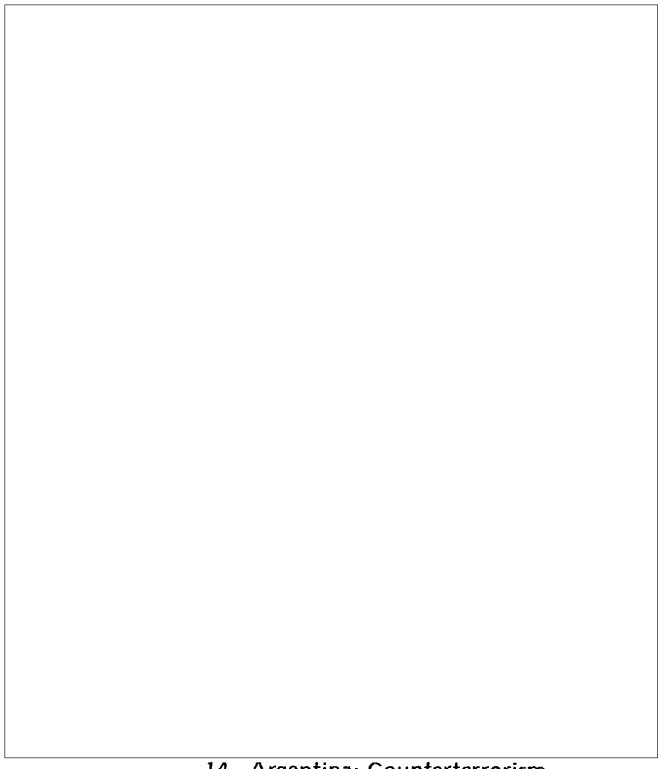

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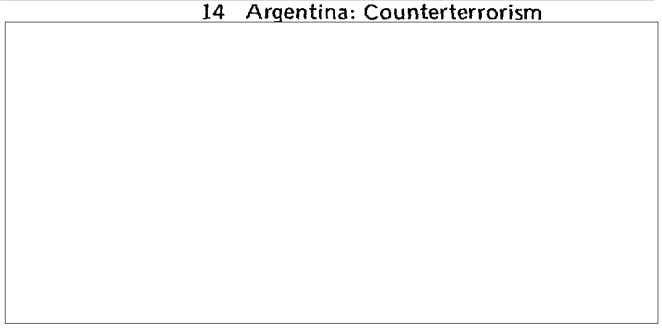
14 Argentina: Counterterrorism



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Comments and queries on the contents of this publication are welcome. They may be directed to the editor of the Weekly Summary,

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ARGENTINA: COUNTERTERRORISM

Responding to an unprecedented upsurge in left-wing violence and kidnapings, President Maria Estela Peron has formally outlawed the Montonero guerrillas as the first step in what may become a major offensive against all Argentine terrorists.

The Montoneros supported the return of Juan Peron from exile in 1973, but declared "war" against his widow in September 1974. Her government had avoided taking official action against them for fear of further antagonizing liberal Peronists who, while not necessarily agreeing with the Montoneros, were being alienated by the administration's conservative policies. Because of their position and strength the Montoneros have played an effective political role through agitation within the Peronist labor movement and have even fielded candidates under the banner of the "Authentic Party" in a recent provincial election.

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The government's decision gives security forces greater freedom of action in counterinsurgency operations. Until now, sympathetic newspapers and broadcasting stations could force the release of Montonero guerrillas held without charge, simply by publicizing their names. Such actions in behalf of outlawed groups are forbidden under current censorship restrictions.

Other measures are likely to be announced soon. The new army commander, General Jorge Videla, has told newsmen that the army's anti-guerrilla operations in Tucuman Province—where the principal opponent has been the People's Revolutionary Army—could be extended throughout the country "if the circumstances warranted it." He added that a federal organization might be formed to coordinate the actions of all the security forces.

The Montoneros and the People's Revolutionary Army hope to goad the armed forces leaders into ousting Peron's civilian government, which they regard as insufficiently radical. The expected popular revulsion against military administration, they believe, would virtually assure a left-wing political victory once elections were held. In pursuit of this long range goal, the guerrillas have been focusing their terrorist attacks on all branches of the armed forces.

Argentine society cannot long endure the twin assaults of economic deterioration and mounting violence, which feed on each other and in time could bring about the political polarization the extremists seek. Recent statements by military leaders strongly indicate that they have decided to support the government in the initiative against the terrorists rather than allow the situation to deteriorate further. 3.5(c)

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